

Town of Amherst Public Works Committee  
meeting of Tuesday, February 1, 2005  
DPW Building, 7:00pm

present: Guilford Mooring, Walter Wolnik (observer), Michael Cann, Doug Lowing, Rob Crowner

1. Doug calls the meeting to order at 7:15pm.

2. Review of minutes of January 11 meeting. Walter corrects the spelling of his name. The minutes are accepted as edited. Doug thanks Guilford for arranging to have the minutes posted on the town website in draft form. He notes also that there is a calendar on the page. Michael requests clarification about the committee's chairmanship. Rob states that it had been too difficult to coordinate early meetings when there were co-chairs and Doug states that he has agreed to serve as chair while Rob acts as secretary.

### 3. Pavement Management Report

Guilford distributes notes on the presentation he made to the Select Board about the Pavement Management Report his department has compiled. All 102 miles of town roads and 45 miles of town

sidewalks have been assessed for wear, and the program used will enable the DPW to create objective priority lists. The report will soon be available on the town website.

Guilford mentions that the sidewalk mileage does not match previously reported figures (i.e., for the snow plowing plan) because some sidewalks are not associated with town-owned roads. These sections will eventually be added to the pavement management report.

Walter requests that a detailed explanation of how the report was compiled be included on the website. Guilford states that this is being worked on. Doug notes that it will not be possible to provide all of the information that anyone might want.

Guilford explains that the roads were rated according to functional classification and overall condition. Given cost estimates and measurements, the software can generate construction priority lists for various scenarios. In the current case, out of a \$400,000 budget, \$50,000 will be set aside for crack sealing and preventative maintenance; \$50,000 for neighborhood roads; and the rest will be devoted to main roads. The total cost to repair all of Amherst's roads would be about \$3.8 million. At this point, only roads are included in the projections; sidewalks cannot be combined with roads. The program may be customized to block out certain roads from the list, such as those already included in other projects. Considering that, all of the other main roads should be completed within two years.

The FY06 preliminary street work list (as contained in the presentation) is already being changed because of plans by UMass to work on North Pleasant Street over the next three years. When the preliminary list is recalculated, the DPW will next check for other issues, such as utilities and sidewalks, and revise the list if necessary. Sidewalks can be done with Chapter 90 funds if they are incidental to adjacent street work, though this would add to the total cost of the project and would require an adjustment to the list budget. The Town's FY07 capital plan calls for \$30,000 in sidewalk maintenance (that which can't be covered by Ch. 90), and the program can project what that would cover (included in the presentation).

Guilford states that attempts will be made to schedule contiguous sections for the same time, regardless of rating, rather than jumping from major area to major area, which would increase costs. Where possible, Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds will be used to pay for construction, which might affect when problems are addressed.

Walter inquires about the categories of functional classification. Guilford states that the town is attempting to bring its classification system into alignment with state definitions before releasing this data. The town uses "rural" and "residential" terms, while the state uses "urban" terms for the same streets.

Doug believes that the plan will be accepted by the public, now that there is a rationale for how road repairs are scheduled. He emphasizes that the more information is made available, the better people will feel about it.

#### 4. Public hearings

Guilford recommends that plans for a hearing on the South Amherst Common project be put off until the Munson Library decides how it wants to present the project. The modelling shows that all of the proposed changes will work except possibly the South East Street/Shays Street/Pomeroy Lane intersection(s). After all parties have had a chance to comment, including the PWC, the Select Board, as "purveyor of the way", will make the decision about how to go forward.

Guilford reports that the South Pleasant Street and University Drive projects are not yet ready for public discussion.

#### 5. DPW budget

Guilford reports that the DPW will be requesting only a single dumptruck from the capital plan in FY06. Increased snow plowing responsibilities make a larger truck necessary. The storage shed near the high school fields will be finished soon, allowing the park and rec vehicles to be moved out of the DPW building.

#### 6. New sidewalks

Guilford advises the committee to consider whether and how it wants to prioritize potential new sidewalks. The list gutted by Town Meeting during the Great Sidewalk Debate includes: (1) South East Street from College Street to Colonial Village, (2) East Pleasant from Tilson Farm Road to Pine Street, and (3) Belchertown Road from Gatehouse Road to Logtown Road. To that can be added: (a) Old Farm Road, (b) East Hadley Road, and (c) Red Gate Lane from North Whitney Street to Strong Street. There is currently no funding for any of these projects. Guilford agrees to bring estimates for both the old and new lists to the next meeting.

#### 7. Next meeting

The committee agrees to meet on March 1 in a space downtown. The agenda will include discussion of possible sidewalk extensions. Guilford will bring a map showing the ratings of existing sidewalks on both sides of the street. There is no public hearing currently scheduled. The meeting is adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rob Crowner